

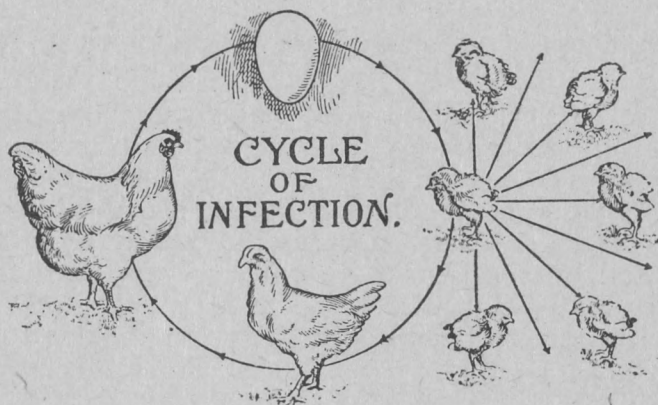
# PULLORUM DISEASE IN CHICKS

(Bacillary White Diarrhoea)

ISSUED BY POULTRY BRANCH

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Pullorum disease (formerly called Bacillary White Diarrhoea) is caused by a germ known as *Salmonella pullorum*. It is primarily a disease of chicks, but is also found in mature stock as well.

Pullorum affects turkeys as well as chickens and the disease is widespread, being found wherever poultry is kept.

Symptoms: In mature birds the disease is usually in the chronic form, localizing in various parts of the body, especially in the ovaries. These birds are known as "carriers," and transmit the disease to other birds through the droppings or to chicks through infected eggs.

With chicks the disease is usually in the acute form. Some of the infected chicks will not show any definite symptoms before death, but if many are affected they will appear depressed, have no appetite, and tend to crowd under the hover or in the corners. Drooping wings, shrill chirping, gasping for breath and diarrhoea with pasting of the vent are the general symptoms of the disease. Mortality starts about the third day and is usually heaviest during the second week and may be as high as 100 per cent.

Post-mortem: Post-mortem examination of chicks that die early may not show any definite internal symptoms. Chicks surviving a longer time may show unabsorbed egg yoke, and may have nodules around the heart, lungs and other organs.

A definite diagnosis can only be made by bacteriological examination at a Laboratory.

Cure: There is no known cure for Pullorum disease.

Control: As this disease is spread from the parent stock through infected eggs, it is essential that this source of infection be brought under control. Alberta Hatchery and Flock Approval Regulations (chicken and turkeys) require that all birds used to supply hatching eggs to Alberta licensed hatcheries must be in sanitary surroundings, be blood tested for pullorum, and all reactors destroyed. Chicks should only be purchased from an Alberta Approved Hatchery.

Brooder houses, runs, equipment, etc., must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected and kept sanitary, otherwise clean chicks may become infected soon after arrival. Never raise young stock with old stock. Keep chickens, turkeys and other fowl apart.

Pullorum should not be confused with similar symptoms caused by chilling, overheating, poor quality or insufficient feed. These are factors that will intensify the spread of the disease should it be present.

Purchasing chicks from an Alberta Approved Hatchery and carrying out sound sanitary management and feeding practices is your best insurance against Pullorum.